



United States
Department of
Agriculture



National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service

Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP)

NRCS Supplement

2005 Handbook

NRCS Supplement Handbook

CEAP 2005

CEAP & the NRCS Supplement

As part of the Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP), NRCS has been working with NASS and FSA to collect data concerning farming practices, conservation practices and participation in government programs. This data is provided to NRCS who will assess the effectiveness of existing programs and to provide insights into the direction of future conservation programs.

NASS will be collecting farm level data about activities on a field identified by a specific NRI point. NASDA enumerators will conduct approximately 7,489 interviews from late September through early December 2005. The 2005 survey is the third year of a five year data collection effort.

Data for each NRI point will be collected using a Respondent questionnaire, aerial image for the CEAP Point, and an NRCS supplement. Enumerators will contact the operators of the selected field to complete the questionnaire. The data for the NRCS supplement must be acquired from the local NRCS offices that have the official records for the selected fields. NRCS will be contacted to assist in completing the matching supplement. Both the questionnaire and the NRCS supplement are required for a complete response. One without the other is not complete and cannot be utilized for the CEAP project.

Purpose

This handbook is provided to NRCS personnel to assist in understanding the role of the local offices for the CEAP survey. The information contained in this document is an attempt to identify the data that will be collected using the supplement for the field identified for the 2005 CEAP sample.

Enumerators have been instructed to contact the appropriate NRCS offices to determine the best plan of action to accommodate each NRCS office and the data collection time frame.

By reviewing the aerial image, county NRCS personnel will be able to identify the correct records to use in compiling information for the supplement. The aerial image (which is used to locate the selected fields and identify the decision makers) is required to complete the NRCS supplement to ensure that the data is for the same selected field and the same respondent.

IMPORTANT: If the NRCS supplement is completed independently from the respondent's questionnaire, a review/comparison of the supplement with the completed questionnaire will be necessary for 2 important reasons.

- 1) **ADJUSTED POINTS.** If the point was adjusted during the quality control check, the incorrect field may have been used for the independently completed supplement. Verify the field using the aerial image that was used to complete the questionnaire is the same field for the conservation plan used to complete the NRCS supplement. Complete the supplement with the correct information for the selected field.
- 2) **CONSERVATION PLAN NAME ON FILE.** The name on the conservation plan may or may not be the same as the respondent on the actual questionnaire. This can occur when a field with an existing conservation plan is rented or leased to someone after a conservation plan was developed and/or implemented under another operator or owner. Verify that the responses to **Items 1b** and **1c** reflect the correct name on the conservation plan when compared to the completed questionnaire.

An NRCS Supplement should be completed for each completed CEAP questionnaire using the Conservation Plan on file. Supplements for questionnaires that are refusals, inaccessible, or incomplete are not required. However, the completion status will not be known until after the respondent is contacted.

COMPLETING THE SUPPLEMENT

Conservation Plan Reference

Implementation of conservation programs has resulted in cooperation between the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and NRCS. This cooperative effort extends to a record keeping system that crosses Agencies. Official records for Conservation Plans are maintained at the local NRCS office.

The Conservation Plan references will include the County FIPS, Tract Number and Land Unit Number (FSA Field Number) that are used by both Agencies for the official documentation.

The FIPS code, tract number and land unit number (FSA Field Number) should be recorded in the appropriate boxes. All contract numbers associated with the conservation plan should be recorded in the boxes reserved for Contract Number(s). The contracts listed should include those eligible for federal conservation program money.

Item 1: Conservation Plan on File for NRI Point

Identify if a conservation plan exists for the selected field **AND** if that plan is on file with the NRCS office. The Conservation Plan is specific for the selected field.

1a. Determine if the selected field containing the NRI point has a conservation plan on file.

Enter 1 for YES, and continue. If no, enter 3 and conclude the interview.

If a conservation plan is on file in the NRCS office, determine if the name on the current plan is the person verified as the current operator of the selected field.

In some instances the owner of the property may have implemented some structural conservation practices, discontinued operating the property but leased it out to another individual. The conservation practices may still be in place and may be considered as part of the lease agreement. The current operator may not be receiving the incentive payments, but benefits from conservation practices that were put into place.

1b. If Item 1a = YES, then ask: Is a conservation plan on file for the current operator of the selected field.

If YES, enter 1 and continue. If NO, leave blank and continue.

If a conservation plan is on file in the NRCS office, determine if the name on the current plan is the person verified as the current land owner of the selected field.

A Conservation Plan may have been developed for the selected field by a previous owner of the property. The current owner may not have implemented the original plan but the plan stayed with the property and may or may not reflect the new owner.

1c. If Item 1a = YES, then ask: Is a conservation plan on file for the current land owner of the selected field.

If YES, enter 1 and continue. If NO, leave blank and continue.

Item 2: Program(s) Associated with the Conservation Plan

Identify the program(s) that are associated with the conservation plan. More than one program could be associated with the producer's conservation plan.

If Yes, then enter a "1" for all programs associated with the plan.

For each program(s) associated with the conservation plan, ask for the most recent year in which the conservation plan was approved.

If Yes, then enter the most recent year (yyyy) that the program was approved for the selected field.

The following list includes programs commonly associated with conservation plans.

Conservation Security Program
NRCS Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) (CO-01)
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
Klamath Basin Water Conservation Program
Ground and Surface Water Conservation Program (GSWC)
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)
Public Law 566 (P.L. 566) (Small Watershed Program)
EPA Programs (such as 319 program)
Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP)
Highly Erodible Land Conservation Compliance (HELCC)
Great Plains Conservation Program (GPCP)
Farmland Preservation Program (FPP)
Other Federal Programs

If any other Federal programs that are associated with the producers conservation plan, please identify the Federal Program.

State or County Programs

If any State or county program(s) associated with their conservation plan, please identify the State or county program(s).

Non-governmental Programs

If any non-governmental program is associated with the producer's conservation plan, identify the program.

Item 3: Resource Concerns Addressed by Conservation Plan

Item 3 is used to identify those resource concerns that are targeted by the conservation plans that have been identified for the selected point. Identifying the most prevalent concerns provides a measure of the effectiveness of the programs in place and those areas that may need additional resources applied either through research or public awareness.

Common natural resource concern(s) that a conservation plan may address includes:

- 1 - Soil erosion caused by wind,
- 2 - Soil erosion caused by rainfall or runoff,
- 3 - Animal waste management,
- 4 - Water quality protection (leaching and runoff of nutrients and pesticides,
- 5 - Water conservation,
- 6 - Wildlife habitat enhancement,
- 7 - Soil quality, including salinity concerns
- 8 - Air quality
- 9 - Drainage
- 10 - Forage for livestock
- 11 - Hayland management
- 12 - Other, identify
- 13 - Don't know.

Enter a "1" for each resource concern addressed in the conservation plan. For "other", please identify the concern and do not code the office use box.

Item 4: Principle Resource Concern Addressed by Conservation Plan

Item 4 identifies the MAJOR resource concern that is addressed in each conservation plan. Selecting from the concerns that are identified as being included in the conservation plan (from above: codes 1 through 12).

Identify the most important resource in Item 3 and record the corresponding code as the response.

If only one code is identified in Item 3, then leave Item 4 blank. By default, the single resource concern identified becomes the principle concern.

Item 5: Wetland Designation

Wetlands are areas where the normal condition of the soil is wet enough for a prolonged period to support the continued growth of the kinds of plants that prefer wet soil conditions.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) would have evaluated the selected field and notified the operator of its classification as a wetland if the operator had requested any kind of federal program benefits for the selected field.

Enter a "1" if any part of this field is identified as meeting the criteria for a wetland. If NO, then leave blank and continue.

Item 6: NRCS Classification of Highly Erodible Land

Whether a field is classified as Highly Erodible depends on rainfall, the potential for soil erosion, and the length and slope of the field. NRCS uses these characteristics and other information to classify fields as Highly Erodible or not.

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) would have

evaluated the selected field and notified the operator of its classification if the operator had requested any kind of federal program benefits for the selected field.

Enter a "1" if any part of this field is identified as Highly Erodible Land (HEL). If NO, then leave blank and continue.

Item 7: Annual Management Practices in Conservation Plan

Identify the annual management practice(s) included in the conservation plan that apply to the selected field. The annual practices and practice codes are identified above Item 7.

Column 1: List all the annual practices that apply.

Column 2. Enter the corresponding NRCS practice codes.

Column 3. For each crop year, indicate if the practice was used. Enter the appropriate code. (YES=1, Don't Know=2, or No=3).

Column 4. If the practice was applied to meet the mitigation requirements of the Pest Management Standard (Code 595), enter 1 for YES. Otherwise leave blank.

Item 7a: Pest Management (Practice Code 595)

If a Pest Management Practice (Code 595) is identified in Item 7 as an annual management practice in the Conservation Plan, then ask the questions concerning the objective(s) of the pest management plan.

If Code 595 (Pest Management) is identified in Item 7, check the YES box and ask 7a. (1). Otherwise, check the NO box and go to Item 7b.

If Item 7a (1) is YES, enter "1" and go to Item 7b and skip (2), (3), and (4).

If Item 7a (2) is YES, enter "1" and continue. If NO, enter a dash and continue.

If Item 7a(3) is YES, enter "1" and continue. If NO, enter a dash and continue.

If Item 7a(4) is YES, enter "1" and continue. If NO, enter a dash and continue.

Item 7b: Nutrient Management (Practice Code 590)

If a Nutrient Management Practice (Code 590) is identified in Item 7 as an annual management practice in the Conservation Plan, the included as part of the Conservation Plan, then ask the questions concerning the objective(s) of the nutrient management plan.

If Code 590 (Nutrient Management) identified in Item 7, check the YES box and ask 7b. (1) through (4). Otherwise, go to Item 8.

If Item 7b(1) is YES, enter "1" and continue. If NO, enter a dash and continue.

If Item 7b(2) is YES, enter "1" and continue. If NO, enter a dash and continue.

If Item 7b(3) is YES, enter "1" and continue. If NO, enter a dash and continue.

If Item 7b(4) is YES, enter "1" and continue. If NO, enter a dash and continue.

Item 8: Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan on File?

Detailed livestock information is not collected on the questionnaire but if the operator has a Comprehensive Nutrient

Management Plan (CNMP) on file with NRCS, please complete Item 8.

If a comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP) is on file, check the YES box and enter 1. Otherwise, check the NO box and enter 3 for NO.

Item 9: Structural Conservation Practices

Item 9 is designed to capture structural practices that have been recommended for the selected field as part of the conservation plan that was developed for the selected field.

A listing of NRCS structural conservation practices is included in the supplement as a ready reference to complete Item 9. The listing includes the practice name, practice number, and the units in which the practice is reported and is sorted in alphabetic practice name order. Any structural practices not on the list should be written in and identified with the corresponding NRCS practice code. If this occurs include detailed notes explaining the practice being used.

From the conservation plan for the selected field, record the structural Conservation practices which are applied to the sampled field.

Column 1: Structural Practice Name

Record the name of the structural practice(s) in the sampled field. If a structural practice is not listed on the listing, record the name of the practice as it appears in the conservation plan.

Column 1: List all the structural practices that apply.

Column 2: Structural Practice Number

Record the practice number for the structural practice(s). Some practices may have letters in them. For example, a cross wind ridge is practice code 589A. Record the

practice in column 2 as "589A". If a structural practice number is not listed on the listing, record the practice number as it appears in the conservation plan.

Column 2. Enter the corresponding NRCS structural practice code(s).

Column 3: Structural Practice Units

Record the unit of measure that the structural practice is measured in.

Unit codes are:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1 | Linear feet |
| 2 | Acres |
| 3 | Number |

Column 3. For each structural practice, indicate the units representing the practice was used. Enter the appropriate code. (1 = linear feet, 2 = acres, or 3 = number).

Column 4: Quantity of Structural Practice Installed

Record the quantity of the structural practice installed in the sampled field. Record all responses to the nearest tenth. For example, if the sampled field has 2 wildlife watering facilities (code 648), record "2.0" in Column 4.

Column 4. For each structural practice, indicate the units representing the practice was used. Enter the appropriate quantity.

Column 5: Most Recent Year Structural Practice Installed

Record the most recent year in which the structural practice listed in Column 1 was installed in the sampled field.

Column 5. For each structural practice, indicate the most recent year installed or applied.

Column 6: Pest Management Mitigation requirements

If the practice was applied to meet the mitigation requirements of the Pest Management Standard (Code 595), enter 1 for YES. Otherwise leave blank.

Column 6. If the structural practice was applied to meet the mitigation requirements of the Pest Management Standard (Code 595), enter 1 for YES. Otherwise leave blank.

REFERENCE

NRCS Contact Name

Include the name or names of the personnel in the NRCS county office that assisted in obtaining the data for the NRCS Supplement.

Enumerator Name

Include the name of the enumerator who contacted the NRCS county office to obtain data for the NRCS Supplement.